

## Neighborhood Plan



Prepared for  
Capitol Hill  
Urban Center Village

Prepared by  
Capitol Hill Neighborhood  
Planning Committee

MAKERS architecture  
and urban design

Sponsored by  
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Neighborhood Planning  
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# Thanks

This document is the product of a four-year effort and thousands of hours of time invested by more than 1200 Capitol Hill community members. Many thanks to all those who contributed their ideas and effort toward making Capitol Hill a beautiful, exciting place to live well into the next century. Thanks especially to the neighborhood Planning Committee members for their extraordinary dedication, leadership and integrity.

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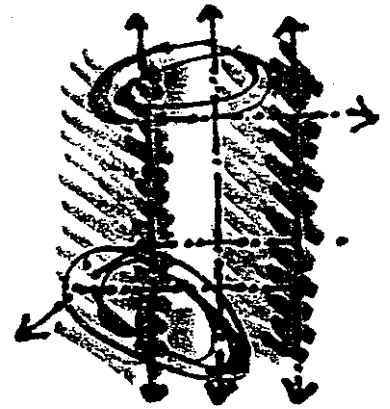
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# Plan Foundations



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## A Vision for Our Future

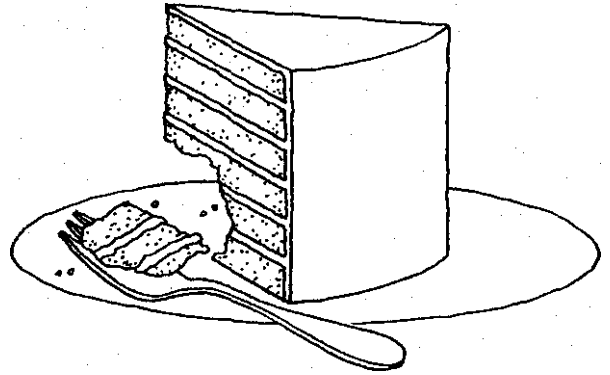
If vibrant business districts, attractive residential areas, accessible transportation and community services, strong institutions, and a diverse population make for a healthy neighborhood, then Capitol Hill must be among the region's most successful communities. Certainly Capitol Hill, with its robust architecture, pedestrian-oriented setting, and lively arts scene, is the Northwest's most urban and urbane community.

There remain, however, challenges in the neighborhood that require focused attention. The area's very desirability has driven up housing prices to the point where affordable housing is not possible on Capitol Hill for many people. Limited parking availability and inadequate sidewalks threaten the viability of Capitol Hill's business corridors. And, as the community grows, adequate transportation access, community services, and open space become increasingly critical.

At the same time, several exciting opportunities offer the potential to profoundly impact the neighborhood's future character. These opportunities include a new mixed-use cultural and commercial complex at the north end of Broadway (at the "Keystone" site at Broadway and E Roy Street), the new Sound Transit light rail line, new open space on the hill over the Lincoln Reservoir, new housing and retail development, and an emerging arts district in the nearby Pike-Pine neighborhood.

Effectively meeting these challenges and opportunities will require a common effort on the part of various community groups and interests. For example, a successful neighborhood parking program will depend on both businesses' and residents' needs being met. At the same time, individual actions will be much more effective if they are integrated into a strategy that **combines** several supporting activities into a coordinated program. For example, to foster positive redevelopment, design guidelines will help ensure that new buildings fit with their neighbors while improved streetscapes, parking management and **transit** services will provide development incentives and community **connections**. Similarly, the public benefit derived **from** park improvements will be greater if the park is **well-**connected to transit access and to the surrounding neighborhood and if it stimulates positive redevelopment with new housing.

*It is understood that implementation of many Neighborhood **Plan** recommendations will require further work by community members and **City staff**. All affected parties shall have the opportunity to be involved in processes that result from the Neighborhood Plan.*



## Introduction

### Capitol Hill Urban Center Village

The 397-acre neighborhood planning area, called the Capitol Hill Urban Center Village (Village), is a densely populated urban neighborhood made up of multiple-family residential areas and storefront commercial streets. The Village is only a portion of what is commonly referred to as “Capitol Hill.” The Village’s north and east boundaries follow existing borders between multiple-family and single-family housing zones (single-family zones lie outside of the Village). To the south, the Village borders the Pike-Pine neighborhood and, to the west, Interstate-5 separates Capitol Hill from downtown.

Capitol Hill can be characterized as a cluster of special districts that tend to run in north-south swaths, following the topography of the Kill. Cultural districts at the neighborhood’s North Anchor District and South Anchor District provide concentrations of cultural facilities, businesses, schools, open space, and transit. The neighborhood’s eclectic pedestrian-oriented *commercial* corridors—Broadway, 15th Avenue, and Olive Way—act as the pulse of Capitol Hill’s social scene. Two large residential neighborhoods—the West Slope and the East Core Districts—provide some of the highest concentrations of housing in the city. (Figure 1.)

### Organization of the Plan

The *Capitol Hill Urban Center Village Neighborhood Plan* (Neighborhood Plan) is a set of principles and recommendations intended to guide City capital investment, private development, **public** policies, and community actions in the Village in ways that fulfill the community’s vision for its future. The Neighborhood Plan provides the context and rationale for these principles and recommendations. Building on the neighborhood’s unique assets, the Neighborhood Plan focuses on (1) Key Strategies, which describe integrated actions pertaining to the Village’s special districts and major issues, and (2) **Technical** Elements, which describe systemic issues pertaining to the entire Village.

The Neighborhood Plan actually consists of two pieces, of which this narrative document is one. The second document, the *Capitol Hill Urban Center Village Approval and Adoption Matrix*, **catalogs** all of the Neighborhood Plan’s recommendations and outlines the City’s strategies for carrying them forward.

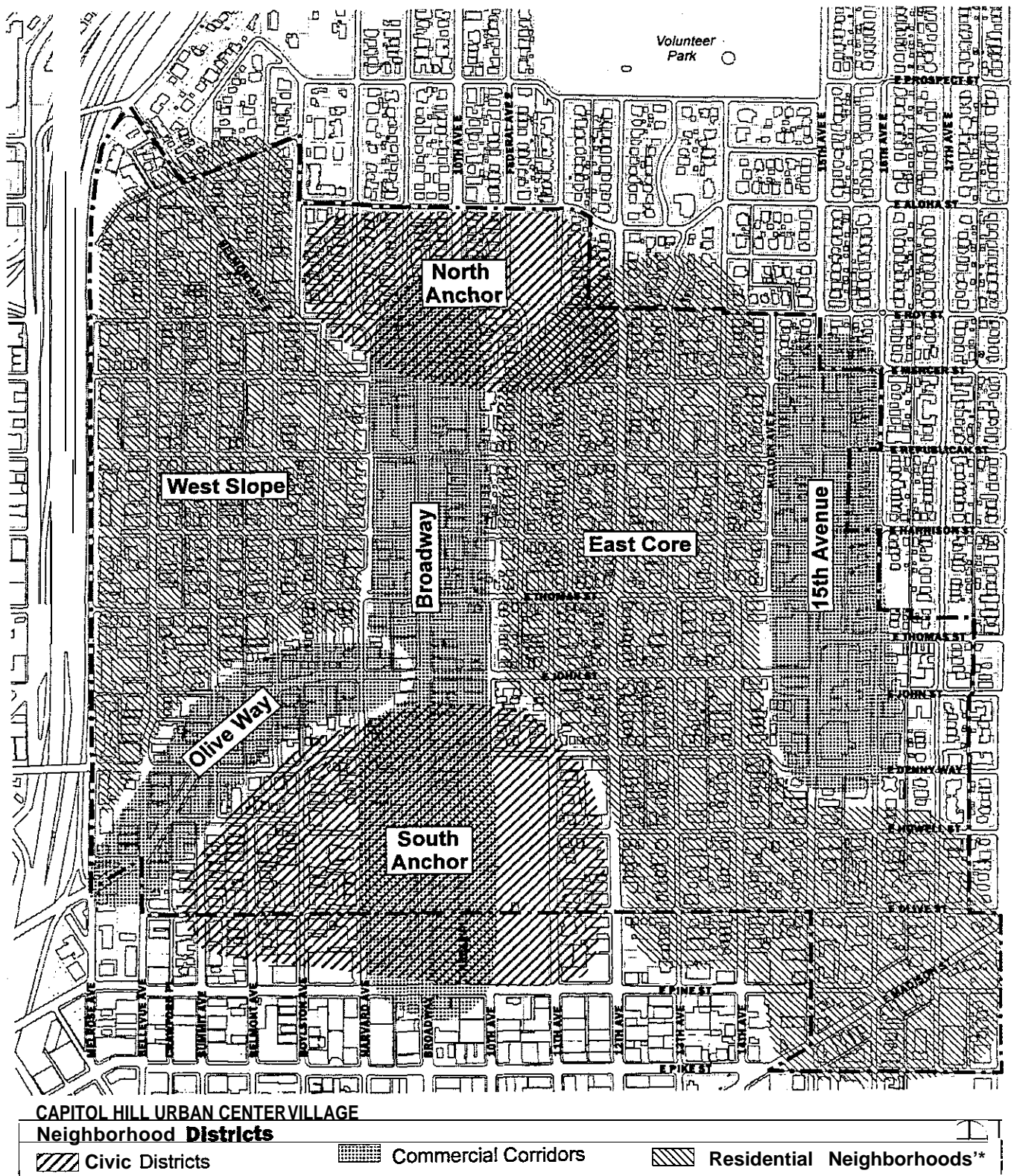
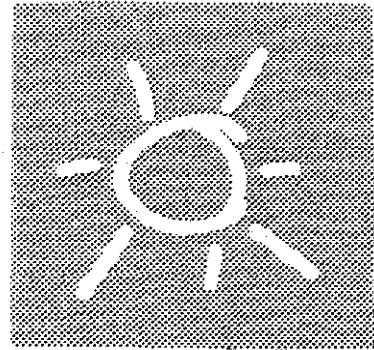


Figure 1. Building on the neighborhood's assets, Capitol Hill can be characterized as a cluster of special districts.



## Planning for Growth

### Seattle's Comprehensive Plan

Seattle's neighborhood planning program stemmed from the state's Growth Management Act (GMA) passed by the Washington State Legislature in 1990. The GMA required Washington communities to plan for their growth over the next twenty years. In response to this mandate, Seattle created Seattle's Comprehensive Plan: *Toward a Sustainable Seattle* (Comp Plan). Adopted by the Seattle City Council in 1994, the Comp Plan proposed to concentrate future growth within the city's existing neighborhoods and to support that growth with new housing, open space, transportation, and services. The Comp Plan established guidelines for each neighborhood to develop a blueprint for accommodating growth in ways that reflect its unique identity and needs. In accordance with these guidelines, thirty-seven Seattle neighborhoods, including Capitol Hill, received City funding and staff support to complete neighborhood plans.

CAPITOL HILL URBAN CENTER VILLAGE			
COMP PLAN GROWTH TARGETS			
	EXISTING	NEEDED	TOTAL BY 2014
Households	11,354 households	1,980 households	13,334 households
Jobs	5,284 jobs	3,000 jobs	8,284 jobs
Open Space	0.83 acres	12.5 acres	13.33 acres

### Capitol Hill's Neighborhood Planning Effort

Capitol Hill's Neighborhood Plan provides a twenty-year vision for growth in the Village. Working with a \$100,000 City grant and assistance from consultants and City staff, volunteer Organizing and Planning Committees consisting of representatives of community groups, merchants, institutions, residents, and special issues conducted a four-year neighborhood planning process. These citizen committees were responsible for integrating and balancing multiple issues from various constituents to achieve a Neighborhood Plan that best represents the interests of the entire Capitol Hill community.

## **Phase 1: Community Outreach**

In early 1995, the Capitol Hill Community Council initiated Capitol Hill's neighborhood planning process. An Organizing Committee conducted extensive community outreach to seek ideas and input from Capitol Hill residents and businesses. Comprehensive outreach "was a particular challenge in the Capitol Hill neighborhood with its large population and high turnover rate. (Approximately 10% of residents on Capitol Hill move every year.) However, hundreds of community members participated in surveys, interviews, information booths, public workshops, and discussion groups. The result was identification of the issues of greatest concern to the community and a vision for Capitol Hill's future, as documented in the *Capitol Hill Urban Center Village Neighborhood Plan: Phase I Summary Report*.

## **Phase II: Plan Preparation**

In early 1997, the Organizing Committee appointed a Planning Committee to build on Phase I work and synthesize it into a plan for City and community action. The Planning Committee developed the Neighborhood Plan concepts while continuing to elicit comment and input on preliminary drafts from neighborhood organizations, businesses, and residents. Public involvement in developing the Neighborhood Plan included design charrettes, work sessions, public workshops, meetings with community organizations, and consultation with City staff. The result was this document and the associated *Capitol Hill Urban Center Village Approval and Adoption Matrix*.

## **Phase III: Plan Implementation**

A new community group will be formed to oversee long-term implementation of the Neighborhood Plan and to continue to update it. Steps that need to occur in early 1999 include establishing this implementation committee and determining how an initial \$50,000 implementation grant from the City will be spent.

A new Neighborhood Plan Stewardship Council will be formed under the auspices of the Department of Neighborhoods and will be an independent, adjunct committee to the longstanding Capitol Hill Community Council. The Stewardship Council will include representatives of community organizations, business groups, and institutions as well as at-large residents and experts on pertinent issues. Stewardship Council members may include current Neighborhood Planning Committee members, Community Council members, or any other interested local citizens.

The Stewardship Council is to consist of fifteen appointed members with staggered terms lasting one or two years. Initial appointments to the Stewardship Council will be made through a formal application and interview process, administered by an *ad hoc* selection panel consisting of Neighborhood Planning Committee members, Community Council members, and Seattle Department of Neighborhoods staff.